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American diplomacy. By Carl Russell Fish, professor of history, University of Wisconsin. [American historical series edited by Charles M. Haskins, professor of history, Harvard university] (New York: Henry Holt and company, 1915. 541 p. \$2.75 net)

Mr. Fish has undertaken the very difficult task of writing the annals of American diplomatic history for the college class room and the general reader within the compass of five hundred pages. In this attempt he is really a pioneer, for the only other writer of the present generation who has used the annalistic method of grouping facts did not attempt a comprehensive review of American diplomatic history and did not produce a textbook. The obstacles in the way of such a treatment of the subject are numerous and serious, nevertheless the author has produced a book which is well written, clear in its statements, undoubtedly comprehensive and almost always interesting. When one takes into consideration the character of much of the material with which he has had to deal this is, as it is meant to be, high praise. The faults of the book are largely, though not solely, due to its brevity and to the method used in the arrangement of events.

After a brief review of certain phases of American diplomacy, the narrative carries the story of our foreign relations from the period of the revolution to the beginnings of our present difficulties with Mexico and to our struggle to maintain neutral rights during the first months of the present European war. The last chapter, which is very short, deals with the causes of the success of our diplomacy. In this chapter, in partial explanation of this success, Mr. Fish emphasizes the essential simplicity of our national demands. The rectification of boundaries, the rights of neutrals, expansion into contiguous and much desired territory, these and similar subjects make up the bulk of the narrative of our diplomatic history. The simplicity, not to say the selfish simplicity, of our policy has led to such acts as the seizure of Florida, the Mexican war, the attempts to repudiate the Clayton-Bulwer treaty and the recognition of the Panama republic, yet we have usually gained what we have desired. In the body of the book especial attention is paid to the diplomacy of the period following the adoption of the constitution, to the foreign relations of the era of the civil war and to the period following the opening of the Spanish war. Of the various discussions, that dealing with the period after the treaty of 1783 seems to be the best and that relating to the international complications due to the world war, the least satisfactory, as is perhaps natural.

The comprehensive character of the book is in many ways remarkable. As an evidence of the new American history, there is a chapter on the west, chapter 7. There are brief paragraphs devoted to extradition

treaties, reciprocity treaties, and the numerous treaties and conventions with the minor states of the world. The characterizations of the members of the diplomatic service and the brief descriptions of the changing ideals of the American people with respect to our relations with foreign powers are for the most part terse and accurate. Mr. Fish possesses an easy, often colloquial, style which carries the reader with ease through a narrative which would otherwise frequently seem overburdened with facts. The sixteen maps are well chosen and accurate, though not always clear. Especially interesting, as well as unusual, are the two maps placed inside the covers, one showing the establishment of diplomatic posts to the year 1914, and the other the development of our consular service to 1891. The map used to show the territorial expansion of the United States could be made clearer either by the use of different type or by the use of colors and explanatory notes. As it stands it is far from satisfactory. The plan of the footnotes is excellent. In them, instead of specific references in support of the detailed statements of the text, are placed the titles of monographs or primary sources in which the reader may, if he so desires, pursue the subject further. The more important reference works are usually cited: the writings of statesmen, pertinent congressional documents, the monographs upon special periods or topics and the sections of the more general works that bear upon the subject.

The merits and demerits of the annalistic method when used in connection with such a subject as diplomatic history are well illustrated by the book under review. The author has tried, usually with success, to record events in their chronological order; but there are several exceptions to this general rule. In order to introduce the northeastern boundary dispute, we are (pp. 228 ff.) carried back to the treaty of 1783 and the subsequent negotiations. Again on pages 245 and following the story of Texas is briefly told as an introduction to its annexation. The discussion of American interest in Hawaii prefaced to the discussion of its annexation (pp. 402-405) is an unhappy example of a digression from the normal method of narration, for it does not include *inter alia*, Marcy's treaty of annexation, briefly noted on page 297. A much more important matter is the effect of the annalistic method upon the treatment of such a subject as the Monroe doctrine. Instead of gaining a clear conception of a principle gradually adapted to meet the changed conditions of different times, one is apt to carry away, and then only after careful reading, a series of more or less disconnected impressions. In this instance one chapter, chapter 17, is devoted to the origins of the Monroe doctrine. The extensions and applications of the policy are discussed in various subsequent parts of the work, in their proper chron-

ological niches. Perhaps this is an inevitable result of the annalistic method. It does, however, weaken the reader's sense of continuity to have to wait for the various developments of an important policy until they are met, almost accidentally, between descriptions of wholly irrelevant material. The extension of the Monroe doctrine made by President Polk is stated, though not explained or discussed, in the account of the Oregon controversy (pp. 268-269). In such a setting its importance would hardly be apparent to even a careful reader.

A serious defect in the composition of the book is the failure to preserve a proper balance between the space devoted to different events and different periods. This criticism is not based upon the reviewer's opinion of the relative importance of the various episodes in our diplomatic history. On page 368, the author, referring to the period from 1861 to 1877, writes as follows: "The most important in our diplomatic history since independence, its record . . ." To this most important period of sixteen years there are devoted sixty-five pages of the book (pp. 304-369). On the other hand sixty pages (pp. 79-139) are devoted to the twelve years following the establishment of the new government under the constitution. If the amount of space given to a subject is to be taken as an indication of its importance, the earlier period should surely be favored with the qualifying adjective. Elsewhere (p. 4) is this statement: "Never again in the future, however, can we ignore our international relations as we did from 1829-1898." Yet, in spite of this characterization of the period, one hundred and eighty-seven pages, of the total number of five hundred, are devoted to a description of the diplomatic events of its sixty-nine years. To the years from 1774 to 1829 when (p. 1) "diplomacy was recognized by the intelligent to be as essential to the establishment of our national existence as arms," and when "Foreign affairs absorbed attention that was needed for domestic problems," only one hundred and ninety-eight pages are given. This lack of due emphasis, this absence of high lights and deep shadows, is a marked characteristic of the book and is largely the result of the attempt to make it all-comprehensive. As an illustration of another sort of fault it may be noted that, whereas the Polk doctrine is dismissed with sixteen lines of the text (pp. 268-269), the elimination of religious problems from American diplomacy at the time of the establishment of our independence, is given fifty-eight lines (pp. 51-52).

Errors due to defective proof reading are few. On page xi the dates annexed to the map showing the development of our consular service should be 1776-1891, not 1876-1891. The date of the congressional declaration of war (p. 174) should be June 18, not July 18, 1812. Though Captain Gray first discovered what appeared to him to be the

outlet of a great river in 1791, it was in 1792, not in 1791, that he sailed up the Columbia (pp. 93, 148). The "statute of Frederick the Great" (p. 467) presented to this nation by the kaiser should be an edifying spectacle. To point out errors of omission in a book of such comprehensive scope, would be carping criticism. In several instances the reviewer has felt that more might have been said about a certain subject, but this, it would seem, is a legitimate and almost inevitable result of a careful reading of any work. The index to the volume, though detailed, is far from satisfactory in its present state. Under "Polk" no reference is made to the revival of the Monroe doctrine by that president at the time of the controversy with Oregon. On the other hand there are three references to his extension of the Monroe doctrine. In the index is found "Hawkins, Sir John, colonial dreams of, 205." In the text on page 205 the sole basis of this reference is, "If the dreams of Hawkins, of the speculators in the South Sea Bubble, of the colonists to Darien, were perhaps not fully realized, they at least became substantial." "Green, B. E., views in California, 259," is hardly an accurate reference to the text statement that "On April 4, 1844, B. E. Green wrote to Calhoun that California was organized for independence." The text states (p. 167) that Napoleon was forced to "drive from the cabinet his valuable assistant, Fouché," yet this appears in the index as "Fouché, Joseph, in Napoleon's cabinet, 167." The above instances of defective indexing were selected at random.

It would be unjust to close a review of a book which is in so many ways an excellent piece of work, with the above comments on minor errors and faulty indexing. The book will be of real service in the class room and should appeal to the reader in search of an accurate and comprehensive, though brief, work of reference on American diplomatic history. The reviewer realizes that many readers of the work, especially teachers, will hold that the annalistic method, despite its faults, is a more generally useful method than the topical. Perhaps it is. It has been one of the main purposes of this review, not to detract from the very real value of Mr. Fish's achievement, but to point out that, even when used by a scholar who has a full knowledge of his subject, an unusual command of clear-cut English, and excellent powers of careful analysis, the annalistic method applied to American diplomatic history is not fully satisfactory.

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